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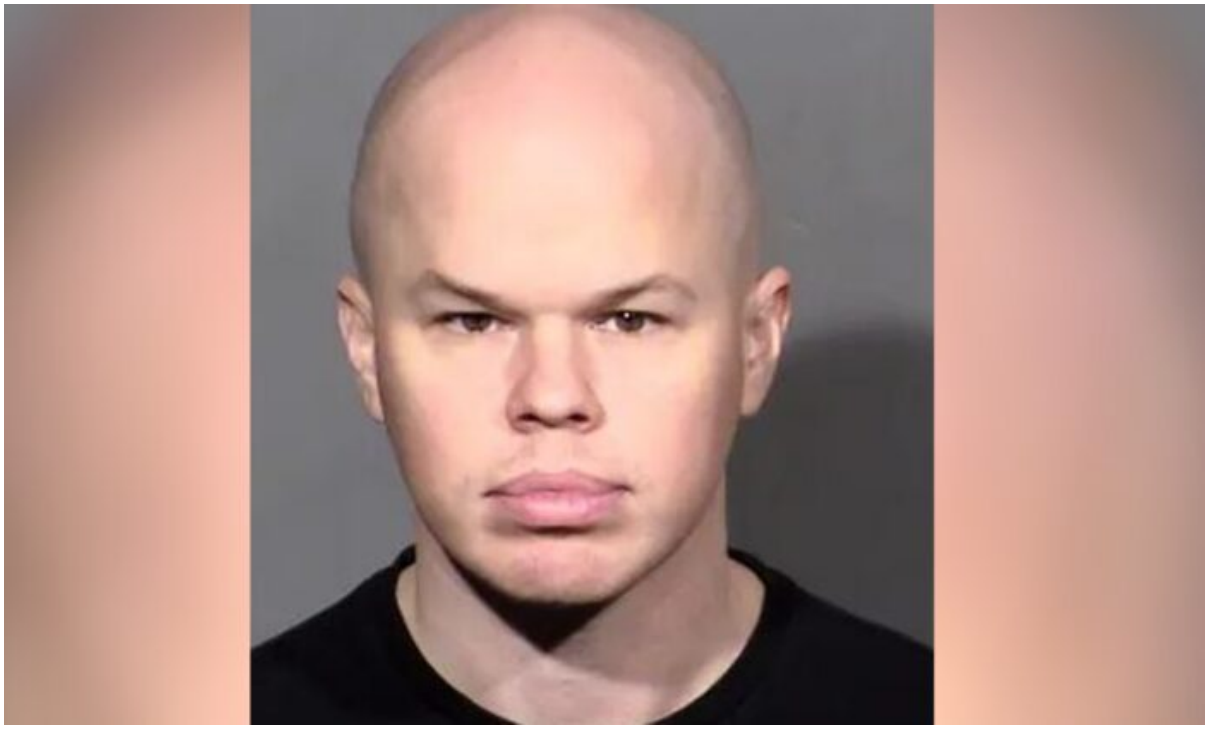
PREMIUM CRIME AND INCIDENTS

‘Nonbinary’ Biden Administration Official Ordered to Undergo Mental Health Evaluation After Avoiding Jail Time



Samuel Brinton in a file mugshot. (Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department via The Epoch Times)

By Zachary Stieber
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A former government official who claims he is nonbinary has been ordered to undergo a mental health evaluation after avoiding jail time for a series of luggage thefts.

Samuel Brinton, until recently a deputy assistant secretary in the Department of Energy’s Office of Nuclear Energy, was able to enter an adult diversion program for the theft he carried out at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport in 2022 while still being employed by the government.

Brinton must undergo a mental health evaluation as well as fulfill other requirements, including writing a letter of apology to the person who owned the luggage that was stolen.

“The case resolved with an opportunity for diversion, which is a standard disposition in a case like this when a defendant has no felony criminal record. It gives an opportunity for the defendant to be accountable and take responsibility for the conduct, and potentially have the case dismissed if they are successful,” a spokesperson for the Hennepin County Attorney’s Office told The Epoch Times via email.

“Diversion in this case will include a mental health evaluation and following all recommendations, signing a release of information within 2 weeks of intake to allow providers to give updates of progress, performing 3 days of community work service, and writing an apology letter. And of course remain law abiding.”

Brinton was captured on video footage at the airport on Sept. 16, 2022, removing a bag owned by another person, taking off the tag, and going to a nearby hotel. After Brinton initially told police officers that did not take anything that did not belong to him, he later called airport police and said he took a bag that did not belong to him.

Brinton had faced up to five years in prison and a fine of up to $10,000.

The diversion program entry means Brinton is avoiding jail time in a second case.

Brinton was also caught on camera taking luggage belonging to another person at Harry Reid International Airport in Las Vegas, Nevada, in July 2022.

Charging documents said Brinton stole items worth more than $3,670 after removing the tag on the bag and quickly leaving the airport.

Brinton faced a felony theft charge but pleaded no contest to misdemeanor theft, according to court records.

Brinton was sentenced on April 12 by Judge Ann Zimmerman to a suspended jail sentence. Brinton must pay $3,670 in restitution to the victim and "stay out of trouble," according to the records.

A lawyer who represented Brinton did not respond to a request for comment.

Brinton departed the Department of Energy by the end of 2022, the agency told news outlets. It remains unclear whether Brinton was terminated or resigned.

Brinton was placed on administrative leave when initially facing charges. According to a document obtained by Townhall, Brinton was paid his six-figure salary while on administrative leave.

The document shows that Brinton's access to government buildings was revoked and that Brinton's government email and phone were suspended while on leave.

Brinton identifies as "non-binary," with the identity being promoted on Brinton's government profile and by Brinton in social media posts. Brinton is "a well-known advocate for LGBTQ youth," the profile stated before being taken down.

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